

REMARKS

Claims 1, 15-16, and 18-27 are pending. Claims 1, 18, 21 and 27 are amended herein.

In the Office Action, claims 21-25, and 27 were rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph. Claim 21 has been amended to depend from claim 20 instead of canceled claim 7. Accordingly, the Section 112 rejection of claims 21-25, and 27, should be withdrawn.

Further in the Office Action, all pending claims, except claims 17-18, were rejected under either 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) or 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as anticipated by or unpatentable over United States Patent No. 6,546,551 ("Stock"). Claims 17-18 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were further indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 17 has been canceled. Claim 1, from which claim 17 previously depended, has been amended to incorporate the limitations previously recited in claim 17. Therefore, claim 1 is now in condition for allowance, as are all other pending claims, which all depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance over the prior art of record. Therefore, this response is believed to be a complete response to the Office Action. However, Applicants reserve the right to set forth further arguments supporting the patentability of their claims, including the separate patentability of the dependent claims not explicitly addressed herein, in future papers. Further, for any instances in which the Examiner took Official Notice in the Office Action, Applicants expressly do not acquiesce to the taking of Official Notice, and respectfully request that the Examiner provide an affidavit to support the Official Notice taken in the next Office Action, as required by 37 CFR 1.104(d)(2) and MPEP § 2144.03.

CONCLUSION

All rejections have been addressed. In view of the above, the presently pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. It is believed that any fees associated with the filing of this paper are identified in an accompanying transmittal. However, if any additional fees are required, they may be charged to Deposit Account 18-0013, under Order No. 65999-0012, from which the undersigned is authorized to draw. To the extent necessary, a petition for extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a) is hereby made, the fee for which should be charged against the aforementioned account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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